

## **ELL UPDATES FOR 2008-2009**

Sent to coordinators, teachers, and administrators, this document addresses topics and resources for many aspects of ELL education in Vermont, including: program administration, Web sites, standards, assessments, training and products for educating English Language Learners in Vermont K-12 schools.

### **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) COORDINATORS:**

Our office has contacted all School Districts/Supervisory Unions in Vermont to update the names and contact information for all ELL Coordinators. This information is essential for communications related to educational requirements and resources for English Language Learners. Lucille Chicoine at the Vermont Department of Education will be maintaining an up-to-date list that includes the following ELL Coordinator information:

- Name & Title
- Phone Number & Extension
- E-Mail Address
- Fax Number
- Mailing Address
- Shipping Address

If there are any other changes during the school year, please contact Lucille Chicoine at [Lucille.Chicoine@state.vt.us](mailto:Lucille.Chicoine@state.vt.us) so she can update our records.

The list of 2008-2009 ELL Coordinators will be posted on the Vermont Department of Education's Web site for English Language Learner Programs [http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm\\_esl.html](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_esl.html).

### **WEB SITES:**

There are two main Web sites where official information related to the Vermont Department of Education's Title III State Program for English Language Learners is posted:

1. The Vermont Department of Education's Web site for English Language Learners, [http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm\\_esl.html](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_esl.html).
2. The World-Class Instructional Design & Assessment (WIDA)\* Consortium's Web site, <http://www.wida.us>.

\*Vermont has been part of the WIDA Consortium (now made up of 19 member states) since 2003, and works in close collaboration with the WIDA Central Office and other member states in the consortium. For an overview of the WIDA Consortium, and to learn more about our consortium's K-12 English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards, Assessment Tools, Training, Resources, Research, News, and Customer Service, I recommend bookmarking the newly enhanced WIDA Web site.

There you'll also find plenty of information about new products and services provided by WIDA, including expanded professional development offerings, the updated online ACCESS for ELLs® Training Course, continual improvement of ACCESS for ELLs® test items and structure, the development of the Measure of Developing English Language (MODEL)™ —

previously referred to as the “box kit” assessment, and the CLIMBS™ professional development course.

## **STATE OF VERMONT PRIMARY/HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY FORMS:**

All schools in Vermont should use **only the most CURRENT VERSION** of the survey, which can be downloaded at the VT DOE Web site by going to the bottom of the ELL home page, [http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm\\_esl.html](http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm_esl.html). Procedures for handling surveys are given at the top of the form.

Older versions of the survey **SHOULD BE DISCARDED**, because they don't include the data required for Federal assessment, accountability, and reporting purposes. The Vermont DOE will follow-up with schools/districts when necessary information is missing.

## ***WIDA'S ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY (ELP) STANDARDS AND RESOURCE, 2007 EDITION, PREKINDERGARTEN-GRADE 12:***

The WIDA Consortium's English Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners (ELLs) in PreKindergarten through Grade 12 encompass:

- Social and Instructional language
- the language of Language Arts
- the language of Mathematics
- the language of Science
- the language of Social Studies

The WIDA ELP Standards are designed as a curriculum and instruction planning tool. They help educators determine children's ELP levels and how to appropriately challenge them to reach higher levels. To download the Standards and related documents, please go to:

<http://www.wida.us/standards/elp.aspx>.

You'll also find information there about the recently published ***WIDA ELP Standards and Resource Guide, 2007 Edition, PreKindergarten-Grade 12***, a must-have for ELL programs in Vermont! Unfortunately, due to high demand, WIDA is currently experiencing a shortage of books and any upcoming orders may be temporarily backordered until they receive more copies from the printer. Because the introductory price of \$10 per copy for consortium members will no longer be in effect after October 31, and the new price per copy will be \$15 for consortium members and \$20 for non-members, there's no time like the present to place an order for your district's copies of this invaluable resource.

Another useful new resource expected to be released by WIDA sometime during fall 2008 is the **Grade Cluster-Specific** version of the popular **CAN DO Descriptors**. The descriptors will be organized by language proficiency level, domain, and grade level cluster, making it even a better tool for ELL teachers to communicate with classroom teachers about language in the classroom. Stay tuned!

## **ACCESS FOR ELLs®--ANNUAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY ASSESSMENT:**

**ACCESS FOR ELLs®** stands for *Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners*. It is a large-scale test that first and foremost addresses the English language development standards that form the core of the WIDA Consortium's approach to instructing and testing English language learners. These standards incorporate a set of model performance indicators (PIs) that describe the expectations educators have of ELL students at four different grade level clusters and in five different content areas. You can find detailed information about the WIDA language proficiency levels and the tiered assessment system of the **ACCESS FOR ELLs®** at <http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/index.aspx>.

ACCESS for ELLs®, Vermont's annual English language proficiency assessment, will be administered to all English Language Learners (ELLs) enrolled in K-12 schools throughout the state during the test window from **March 2, 2009 – April 17, 2009**. ELL Coordinators in each district/supervisory union are responsible for ensuring that the task and timelines for the annual English language proficiency assessment are handled in as efficient and timely a manner as possible.

All test administrators for the **ACCESS FOR ELLs®** must hold a Vermont teaching license (with ESL Endorsement) and complete the required training prior to the test window next Spring.

### **NEW ACCESS FOR ELLs® ON-LINE TEST ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING FOR 2008-2009:**

#### **Purposes of the Online ACCESS for ELLs™ Test Administrator Training:**

- To provide information and training materials to **licensed** ELL educators who are authorized to administer ACCESS for ELLs®;
- To provide sample speaking test items and sound files so that educators, who will administer ACCESS for ELLs® and/or the W-APT, can understand and interpret the Speaking rubrics and can implement and score the speaking test appropriately and accurately;
- To certify through the successful completion of online quizzes that educators who will administer ACCESS for ELLs® are qualified to do so.

In the 2008-2009 testing cycle, WIDA will no longer be using the UW-Oshkosh Desire2Learn (D2L) platform. The **NEW ACCESS for ELLs® Test Administrator Training** course can be (securely) accessed via the WIDA Consortium Web site <http://www.wida.us>. All users (including those previously enrolled in the D2L course) *must be reenrolled* in this new course. In Vermont, enrollment will be handled by the State. To have an account created, please e-mail [James.McCobb@state.vt.us](mailto:James.McCobb@state.vt.us) to request a new user name and password. Once a new account has been created, you will receive an automatically-generated enrollment e-mail with your new user name and password.

ELL Coordinators have responsibility for overseeing the administration of the ACCESS for ELLs® in their district or supervisory union. If coordinators are not personally administering the test or training anyone else to do so, they are not *required* to be enrolled. However, coordinators

who want to learn more about the test and their role and responsibilities as District Test Coordinators will find that the training course a good way to do that. Coordinators are not required to take the training course quizzes.

For those of you who have taken the training course in previous years, some of the changes in functionality in the new course at the WIDA Web site include:

- the automatic generation of a certificate indicating the date(s) on which educators have passed each quiz (can be accessed and printed at any time).
- the ability for users to enter their e-mail addresses to receive an immediate reminder of their usernames which will then prompt them to reset their passwords.
- the ability for users to edit their state or district of employment, thereby modifying their enrollment in a particular group.
- WIDA's favorite benefit: the ability to customize, control and improve the content of our course at any time!

One major change to the training course in 2008-2009 is the introduction of WIDA's all **new ACCESS for ELLs® Kindergarten Test** which is intended to engage young English Language Learners with activities that are authentic to their classroom learning environment. The new Kindergarten ACCESS for ELLs®, the secure annual assessment, will be used in all WIDA states, which means that **ALL** Kindergarten test administrators will be required to complete revised training this academic year prior to administering the test. Included at the training site is the Kindergarten Training Video for Test Administrators.

For any questions or concerns about the new training course, please contact the WIDA Help Desk at 1-866-276-7735 or [help@wida.us](mailto:help@wida.us). WIDA always welcomes feedback, as well!

### **WIDA-ACCESS PLACEMENT TEST (W-APT):**

**W-APT™** stands for the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test™. The W-APT™ is aligned to the WIDA English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards and **ACCESS for ELLs® Test**, and is part of a comprehensive assessment system.

This assessment tool, also known as the "screener", is available on the WIDA Web Site <http://www.wida.us/assessment/w-apt/index.aspx> and is used by educators to:

- To consistently identify students who are in need of English language instructional services (potential ELLs).
- To determine the **academic** English language proficiency level (listening, speaking, reading, and writing for academics at their appropriate grade level) of students new to a school or to the U.S. school system in order to determine appropriate levels and amounts of instructional services.
- To accurately assign students identified as ELLs to one of the 3 tiers for ACCESS for ELLs® which is administered annually to all ELLs in Vermont.

This year new W-APT™ user names and passwords are being disseminated to the ELL Coordinators. Because the W-APT™ is a secure test (even though it can be downloaded from the WIDA Web site), the W-APT™ codes for a district should be used only by the authorized ELL coordinator and licensed ELL teachers in the respective district/supervisory union. The

W-APT™ codes for each district are not interchangeable with the codes assigned to individuals taking the ACCESS for ELLs® Test Administration training course.

If you are a new ELL teacher, you should contact your ELL Coordinator for the username and password. If you are a new ELL Coordinator and haven't received this information yet, please contact me. Due to the overwhelming number of beginning-of-school year calls, e-mails, and projects, I'm running behind schedule in sending these codes and apologize for any inconvenience! Thanks for your patience and understanding.

Again, once your user names/passwords are assigned, you can always contact **WIDA Help Desk** toll free at 1-866-276-7735 or e-mail [help@wida.us](mailto:help@wida.us) for assistance.

### **WIDA MEASURE OF DEVELOPING ENGLISH LANGUAGE (MODEL)™ KINDERGARTEN BOX KIT:**

For the 2008-09 academic year, the WIDA Consortium will introduce its new Kindergarten assessments for English language learners, the **WIDA Measure of Developing English Language (MODEL)™ Kindergarten box kit** and the new interactive format of the ACCESS for ELLs® large-scale assessment. Both tests are designed to be more child-friendly and age-appropriate than the previous generation of tools used for the same purposes.

The MODEL™ box kit will be an *optional* replacement to the current W-APT™ identification and placement screener downloadable for free at <http://www.wida.us>. The free version will *remain* available, but the MODEL™ box kit will also be available for purchase in fall 2008. For further information about materials and pricing, click on <http://www.wida.us/assessment/MODEL/index.aspx>. The test administrator materials will be reusable.

### **2008 ACCESS for ELLs® SCORE REPORTS / PARENT NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:**

- In July 2008, **METRITTECH, INC** (the Test Vendor for the WIDA Consortium's ACCESS for ELLs®) mailed 2008 ACCESS for ELLs® SCORE REPORTS to every district with ELL students who were tested in Spring 2008.
- For important background necessary to understand the assessment and score reports, you can also now find the *ACCESS For ELLs® Interpretive Guide for Score Reports 2008* at <http://www.wida.us/assessment/ACCESS/ScoreReports/index.aspx>.
- The packets that were mailed to the districts contained several different types of reports, including parent/guardian report, teacher report, student roster, school frequency report, and district summary report.
- The **Parent/Guardian Reports** should be shared with the parents, preferably through a face-to-face meeting with the parents where there is an opportunity for conversation about the student's results (strengths and needs), instructional program, etc.
- Translations of the (general) Parent/Guardian Report are currently available at this same Web address in Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian-Croatian (Roman alphabet), Creole, French, Gujarati, Hmong, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Lao, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian (Cyrillic alphabet), Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

- All Title III Subgrantees must meet **TITLE III, SEC. 3302 Parental Notification requirements.**

### **ALTERNATE ACCESS FOR ELLs™ PROJECT:**

WIDA has received one of the five awarded Enhanced Assessment Grants (EAGs) for its Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ project. The grant affords the consortium an opportunity to increase the scope of the project to include the continued development of the evidence-based collection approach and the development of a performance-based approach, giving states an option of choosing the approach that is more compatible with their current alternate academic achievement assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Given these opportunities, WIDA feels it is more prudent to dedicate next year to enhancing both parallel forms, conducting additional field trials, and developing professional development materials that will allow for a full rollout of the more ambitious, Alternate ACCESS for ELLs™ project as soon as possible.

Some Vermont teachers really helped out with this project in 2007-2008. States and local districts willing to participate in this year's round of field trials are encouraged to contact Dr. Craig Albers, Principal Investigator for the project, at 608.262.4586 or [caalbers@wisc.edu](mailto:caalbers@wisc.edu). WIDA is working to build a first of its kind assessment that will be fully comparable, reliable, valid, and flexible enough to work well with different states' current approaches. Congratulations to Craig on this new award!

### **CONCLUSION:**

This is a lot of information to digest all at once. Please feel free to contact me with questions, creative ideas, wish lists, and reports about what's going on in your school/district this year, as well as suggestions about how the Vermont Department of Education and your organization(s) can work together to improve things! Stay in touch!

***Jim McCobb, Coordinator***

Title III (English Language Acquisition) Program, Vermont Department of Education